



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

TO: Barbria Bacon, ESDB Superintendent, Director GMS  
Audrey Garvin, Director, NCSD  
Yvonne Barnes, Interim Director/Principal, ENCSD  
Kelly Davis, Principal, GMS  
Jerry Jailall, ESDB Education Consultant  
Shirley Reed, Principal, ENCSD  
Dave Clark, Principal, NCSD

FROM: William J. Hussey, Exceptional Children Division *WJH*  
John R. Pruette, Office of Early Learning *JP*

DATE: March 13, 2018

RE: ESDB Preschool Services

The Department of Public Instruction received questions from the ESDB and from the Director of the Greenville Children's Developmental Services Agency (G-CDSA) about referrals, IEPs, and transportation for preschool children being enrolled in the ESDB. The purpose of this memo is to address those questions and clarify underlying issues around the LEA's responsibility for referral, eligibility determination and offering a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

In June 2017, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) held a special stakeholder meeting to address several issues being posed by a variety of stakeholders (<http://nceln.fpg.unc.edu/node/3025>). Representatives from the ESDB asked the OEL to address the state's expectations for high quality preschool programs, in anticipation of opening preschool classes in the future. This information was provided at that time.

When a child is referred to an LEA from a parent, or one of the seventeen Children's Developmental Services Agencies in NC, it is the responsibility of the LEA of residence to complete the Child Find process. If the child is eligible for special education and related services, and an IEP is developed, the LEA is responsible for providing parents with an offer of FAPE in the LRE. If the parent chooses to not accept that offer and consent for services is denied, the child is no longer eligible for services.

An IEP team may consider services from the ESDB as one option on the continuum of settings, or at the specific request of the parent. In that event, someone from the ESDB should be invited to the IEP meeting if a parent requests that as a consideration. The flow chart process and considerations for placement document (developed in conjunction with the ESDB and issued by the Exceptional Children Division (ECD) on March 10, 2016 (attached)), must guide the process. Additionally, since the ESDB does not enroll nondisabled children in the K-12 setting, it is not expected that they would enroll nondisabled preschool children as well since they are a Separate School.

The rules established for enrollment of children from contiguous counties in the K-12 age range should also apply to preschool children. Regarding questions about transportation of preschool children, the ESDB should follow the established transportation rules for all preschool children. Specific guidelines must be followed relative to monitoring and seat belt use. In addition, reasonable and developmentally appropriate transport times should be considered.

## EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

William Hussey, *Director* | [bill.hussey@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:bill.hussey@dpi.nc.gov)

6356 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6301 | (919) 807-3969 | Fax (919) 807-3243

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The OEL outlined the state's expectation of high quality preschool programs in the June 2017 meeting, factoring in teacher licensure, staff-pupil ratio, health, sanitation, safety, visual supervision and the implementation of a general, early childhood curriculum aligned with the state's NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development standards. Expectations for charting and reporting early childhood outcomes for preschool children with disabilities was also discussed.

It must also be emphasized that it is the responsibility of the LEA of residence to complete the process of transition of children from the Part C Infant-Toddler Program into the Part B 619 Preschool Program. As such, referrals from the Part C program should only be made to the Part B preschool program and not the ESDB.

We understand that the ESDB has established new preschool classes during the 2017-18 school year. Representatives from the ECD and the OEL will contact the Superintendent and appropriate school directors to set up on-site visits in the near future to provide additional technical assistance and support.

WJH/JRP/VKJ/mt

CC: Sherry Thomas  
Dr. Vivian James  
Carol Ann Hudgens  
Sherri Vernelson  
Jill Singer  
CDSA Directors  
Ruth Ann Everett  
Bethany Mayo

Attachments